

APPENDIX B: WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS

Section 2.1.3.1 describes river segments on BLM-managed lands within the Coachella Valley CDCA planning area that have been determined eligible for designation as Wild and Scenic Rivers in accordance with the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 (P.L. 90-542). Section 3.1.3 describes the manner by which rivers are determined to be eligible.

Table B-1 summarizes eligibility assessments conducted for Whitewater Canyon, Mission Creek (main channel, North Fork, South Fork, and West Fork), Big Morongo Canyon, Little Morongo Canyon, and Palm Canyon. Tentative classifications of eligible river segments as *wild*, *scenic*, or *recreational* are based on the degree of access and amount of development along the river area. Designated river segments are classified and administered under one of the following, as defined in Section 2(b) of the Act:

Wild river areas: Those river, or sections of rivers, that are free of impoundments, generally inaccessible except by trail (no roads), with watersheds or shorelines essentially primitive, and having unpolluted waters.

Scenic river areas: Those rivers, or sections of rivers, that are free of impoundments, having shorelines or watersheds largely primitive and shorelines largely undeveloped, but accessible in places by roads (i.e., roads may cross but generally not parallel the river). These rivers are usually more developed than wild and less developed than recreational. This classification may or may not include scenery as an outstandingly remarkable value.

Recreational river areas: Those rivers or sections of rivers that are readily accessible by road or railroad, may have some development along the shoreline, and may have had some impoundment or diversion in the past. This classification, however, does not imply that recreation is an outstandingly remarkable value, nor that the segment must be managed or developed for recreational activities.

Table B-2 provides more detailed information pertaining to the assessments of eligibility. **Table B-3** identifies measures that protect the free-flowing characteristics and outstandingly remarkable values of the eligible river segments pending determinations of suitability or non-suitability as Wild and Scenic Rivers. Protective measures are generally applied to public lands within 1/4 mile of the eligible river segment's bank.

TABLE B-1
Documentation of Eligibility

**Eligibility Assessment for River Segments Identified for Possible Inclusion
as Components of the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System**

<u>River Name</u>	Free-Flowing Values		Outstandingly 3/ Remarkable Values							Potential Classification			Eligibility Determination	
	<u>Yes</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>a</u>	<u>b</u>	<u>c</u>	<u>d</u>	<u>e</u>	<u>f</u>	<u>g</u>	<u>Wild</u>	<u>Scenic</u>	<u>Recreational</u>	<u>Eligible</u>	<u>Non-Eligible</u>
Whitewater Canyon	X					X	X			X		X	X	
Mission Creek (main channel)	X		X			X				X		X	X	
Mission Creek North fork	X		X			X				X			X	
Mission Creek South Fork	X					X				X			X	
Mission Creek West Fork	X					X						X	X	
Big Morongo Canyon		X				X								X
Little Morongo Canyon		X				X								X
Palm Canyon	X					X	X				X		X	

3/ Outstandingly Remarkable Values

a - Scenic

b - Recreational

c - Geological

d - Fish and Wildlife

e - Historical

f - Cultural

g - Other Similar Values

TABLE B-2. ELIGIBILITY EVALUATION

EVALUATION OF FREE-FLOWING CHARACTER, OUTSTANDINGLY REMARKABLE VALUES, AND TENTATIVE CLASSIFICATION	
Whitewater Canyon	<p><u>Free flowing</u></p> <p><u>Outstandingly Remarkable Values</u> The BLM-managed segments of Whitewater Canyon provide habitat for federal and state listed endangered species, and state species of special concern (SSSC):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Southwestern Willow Flycatcher (<i>Empidonax traillii extimus</i> – federal and state endangered) – Arroyo southwestern toad (<i>Bufo microscaphus californicus</i> – federal endangered) – Least Bell's Vireo (<i>Vireo bellii pusillus</i> – federal and state endangered) – Summer tanager (<i>Piranga rubra cooperi</i> – SSSC) – Yellow warbler (<i>Dendroica petechia brewsteri</i> – SSSC) – Yellow-breasted chat (<i>Icteria virens</i> – SSSC) – Gray Vireo (<i>Vireo vicinior</i> – SSSC) – Crissal thrasher (<i>Toxostoma crissali</i> – SSSC) <p>The canyon is home territory of the Wanakik lineage of Cahuilla Indians, is considered to be an important collecting and gathering area for the Cahuilla, and contains ceremonial sites and Native American sensitive areas.</p> <p><u>Tentative Classification</u> The segments of Whitewater Canyon on BLM-managed lands within the San Gorgonio Wilderness Additions (totaling 6.5 miles in length) are tentatively classified as “wild” in accordance with Section 2(b) of the Act. The segments outside wilderness are tentatively classified as “recreational”—they are readily accessible by the general public via the paved Whitewater Canyon Road.</p> <p><u>Ineligible Segment</u> The segment of Whitewater Canyon on BLM-managed lands between the community of Bonnie Bell and the Colorado River Aqueduct (about 0.1 mile in length) does not contain any outstandingly remarkable values, hence it is ineligible for designation as a Wild and Scenic River.</p>

<p>Mission Creek – Main channel – North Fork – South Fork – West Fork</p>	<p><u>Free flowing</u></p> <p><u>Outstandingly Remarkable Values</u> The BLM-managed segments of Mission Creek provide habitat for federal and state listed endangered species, and state species of special concern (SSSC):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Southwestern Willow Flycatcher (<i>Empidonax traillii extimus</i> – federal and state endangered) – Least Bell's Vireo (<i>Vireo bellii pusillus</i> – federal and state endangered) – Yellow warbler (<i>Dendroica petechia brewsteri</i> – SSSC) – Yellow-breasted chat (<i>Icteria virens</i> – SSSC) – Crissal thrasher (<i>Toxostoma crissali</i> – SSSC) <p>The Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail parallels segments of Mission Creek (main channel) and the North Fork in the San Geronio Wilderness Additions. It is regarded by the Pacific Crest Trail Association as “the jewel in the crown of America’s scenic trails,” and spans 2,650 miles from Mexico to Canada through three states.</p> <p><u>Tentative Classification</u> The upper segments of Mission Creek on BLM-managed lands within the San Geronio Wilderness Additions (totaling 3.1 miles in length), as well as the North and South Forks (totaling 1.5 miles in length), are tentatively classified as “wild” in accordance with Section 2(b) of the Act. The lower segments of Mission Creek (both inside and outside wilderness), as well as the West Fork, are readily accessible via dirt roads that parallel the river segments—in wilderness, use of the roads by a private landowner has been authorized by the BLM. These segments are tentatively classified as “recreational.”</p>
<p>Big Morongo Canyon</p>	<p><u>Not free flowing</u> – The presence of a high-pressure gas pipeline along the canyon bottom, in conjunction with potential major maintenance and/or repair activities that could substantially affect the free-flowing character of river segments on BLM-managed lands, renders Big Morongo Canyon as ineligible for designation as a Wild and Scenic River.</p> <p><u>Outstandingly Remarkable Values</u> The BLM-managed segments of Big Morongo Canyon provide habitat for federal and state listed endangered species, and state species of special concern (SSSC):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Southwestern Willow Flycatcher (<i>Empidonax traillii extimus</i> – federal and state endangered) – Least Bell's Vireo (<i>Vireo bellii pusillus</i> – federal and state endangered) – Yellow warbler (<i>Dendroica petechia brewsteri</i> – SSSC) – Yellow-breasted chat (<i>Icteria virens</i> – SSSC) <p>Big Morongo Canyon is not tentatively classified as “wild,” “scenic,” or “recreational” given its ineligibility for designation.</p>

<p>Little Morongo Canyon</p>	<p><u>Not free flowing</u> – The presence of a popular motorized-vehicle touring route along the canyon bottom (Kickapoo Trail) continually disrupts the free-flowing character of Little Morongo Canyon, thereby rendering it as ineligible for designation as a Wild and Scenic River. Illegal hill-climbing activities in the canyon have adversely affected soil conditions and vegetative composition. The hill climb routes are being reclaimed by the BLM.</p> <p><u>Outstandingly Remarkable Values</u> The BLM-managed segments of Little Morongo Canyon provide habitat for federal and state listed endangered species, a federal candidate species, and state species of special concern (SSSC):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Southwestern Willow Flycatcher (<i>Empidonax traillii extimus</i> – federal and state endangered) – Least Bell's Vireo (<i>Vireo bellii pusillus</i> – federal and state endangered) – Yellow-breasted chat (<i>Icteria virens</i> – SSSC) – Little San Bernardino Mountains Linanthus (<i>Linanthus maculatus</i> – federal candidate) <p>Little Morongo Canyon is not tentatively classified as “wild,” “scenic,” or “recreational” given its ineligibility for designation.</p>
<p>Palm Canyon</p>	<p><u>Free flowing</u></p> <p><u>Outstandingly Remarkable Values</u> The BLM-managed segments of Palm Canyon provide habitat for federal and state listed endangered species, and state species of special concern (SSSC):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Southwestern Willow Flycatcher (<i>Empidonax traillii extimus</i> – federal and state endangered) – Least Bell's Vireo (<i>Vireo bellii pusillus</i> – federal and state endangered) – Summer tanager (<i>Piranga rubra cooperi</i> – SSSC) – Yellow warbler (<i>Dendroica petechia brewsteri</i> – SSSC) – Yellow-breasted chat (<i>Icteria virens</i> – SSSC) – Gray Vireo (<i>Vireo vicinior</i> – SSSC) – Southern yellow bat (<i>Lasiurus ega (xanthinus)</i> – federal and state endangered) – Peninsular Ranges bighorn sheep (<i>Ovis canadensis</i> – federal endangered, SSSC) <p>Palm Canyon contains several archaeological sites significant in Cahuilla oral history. A prehistoric trail follows the canyon.</p> <p><u>Tentative Classification</u> The segment of Palm Canyon on BLM-managed lands is tentatively classified as “scenic.” Although existing vehicle routes provide access to and parallel the river segment, these routes are temporarily closed pending completion of the Coachella Valley CDCA Plan Amendment, and would remain closed under the Amendment, though available for administrative purposes such as law enforcement, search and rescue, and fire control. General public access via motorized-vehicle would be prohibited.</p>

TABLE B-3. PROTECTIVE MEASURES

LOCATION OF ELIGIBLE RIVER SEGMENTS AND APPLICABLE MANAGEMENT GUIDANCE	PROTECTIVE MEASURES PENDING DETERMINATIONS OF SUITABILITY OR NON-SUITABILITY
<p><u>WILDERNESS</u> Management of the San Geronio Wilderness Additions in accordance with the Wilderness Act of 1964 and the California Desert Protection Act of 1994 would protect the free-flowing characteristics and outstandingly remarkable values of eligible river segments therein.</p>	<p><u>Wilderness Management</u> (partial listing of use restrictions) – Subject to valid existing rights, federal lands are withdrawn from all forms of appropriation under the mining laws. – New rights-of-way will not be granted. – Casual motorized vehicle and mechanized equipment use is prohibited. – Facilities and improvements such as trails, bridges, signs, and campsites may be provided only where they are the minimum necessary to protect the wilderness resource. – New trails may be constructed only if they are needed to preserve wilderness values and resources. – Establishment of new water-regulating structures is subject to approval by the President. – To the extent possible, wildlife species are allowed to maintain a natural balance with their habitat and with each other.</p>
<p><u>NATIONAL MONUMENT</u> Management of the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument in accordance with its establishing legislation and BLM interim management policy for National Monuments pending completion of the required planning process would protect the free-flowing characteristics and outstandingly remarkable values of eligible river segments therein.</p>	<p><u>Interim Management of the National Monument</u> – Subject to valid existing rights, federal lands are withdrawn from all forms of entry, appropriation, or disposal under the public lands laws; from location, entry, and patent under the public land mining laws; and from operation of the mineral leasing and geothermal leasing laws and the mineral material laws. However, lands may be exchanged with the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians to support the existing cooperative agreement with the BLM. – Pending completion of the management plan, federal lands are managed substantially consistent with current uses occurring on such lands and under the general guidelines and authorities of existing management plans. – Vehicle access by the general public to Palm Canyon is temporarily prohibited pending completion of the Coachella Valley CDCA Plan Amendment. Under all alternatives of the plan amendment, this closure would continue. Routes accessing the eligible river segment would be available only for administrative purposes such as law enforcement, search and rescue, and fire control.</p>
<p><u>OTHER</u> Management of public lands outside designated wilderness and the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument in accordance with the California Desert Conservation Area Plan and the Coachella Valley CDCA Plan Amendment, upon approval, would protect the free-flowing characteristics and outstandingly remarkable values of eligible river segments.</p>	<p><u>CDCA Plan Guidance for Multiple-Use Class “L” (Limited Use) areas and Coachella Valley Amendments to the Plan</u> – Public lands designated as Class L are managed to provide for generally lower-intensity, carefully controlled multiple use of resources, while ensuring that sensitive values are not significantly diminished. – Motorized-vehicle use will be allowed on existing routes of travel until designation of routes is accomplished. The Coachella Valley CDCA Plan Amendment would continue an existing closure to general public access along the eligible segment of Mission Creek. – Management of public lands in accordance habitat conservation objectives and regional land health standards identified in the CDCA Plan Amendment would protect wildlife habitats, native species, riparian stream function, and water quality.</p>